

## SOUTH CAROLINA

*Summary: There is no requirement that rape be reported; however, there is a requirement that gunshot wounds be reported. The victim cannot be required to pay for a medicolegal examination if the victim has filed an incident report with a law enforcement agency.*

### STATUTES ADDRESSING PAYMENT FOR EXAMINATIONS

#### **S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-1350. Medicolegal examinations for victims of criminal sexual conduct or child sex abuse.**

(A) The State must ensure that a victim of criminal sexual conduct in any degree, criminal sexual conduct with a minor in any degree, or child sexual abuse must not bear the cost of his or her routine medicolegal exam following the assault if the victim has filed an incident report with a law enforcement agency.

(B) These exams must be standardized relevant to medical treatment and to gathering evidence from the body of the victim and must be based on and meet minimum standards for rape exam protocol as developed by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, the South Carolina Hospital Association, and the Governor's Office Division of Victim Assistance with production costs to be paid from funds appropriated for the Victim's Compensation Fund. These exams must include treatment for venereal disease, and must include medication for pregnancy prevention if indicated and if desired. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division must distribute these exam kits to any licensed health care facility providing sexual assault exams. When dealing with a victim of criminal sexual assault, the law enforcement agency immediately must transport the victim to the nearest licensed health care facility which performs sexual assault exams. A health care facility providing sexual assault exams must use the standardized protocol described above.

(C) A licensed health care facility, upon completion of a routine sexual assault exam as described in subsection (B) performed on a victim of criminal sexual conduct in any degree, criminal sexual conduct with a minor in any degree, or child sexual abuse, may file a claim for reimbursement directly to the South Carolina Crime Victim's Compensation Fund if the offense occurred in South Carolina. The South Carolina Crime Victim's Compensation Fund must develop procedures for health care facilities to follow when filing a claim with respect to the privacy of the victim. Health care facility personnel must obtain information necessary for the claim at the time of the exam, if possible. The South Carolina Crime Victim's Compensation Fund must reimburse eligible health care facilities directly.

(D) The Governor's Office Division of Victim Assistance must utilize existing funds

appropriated from the general fund for the purpose of compensating licensed health care facilities for the cost of routine medical exams for sexual assault victims as described above. When the director determines that projected reimbursements in a fiscal year provided in this section exceed funds appropriated for payment of these reimbursements, he must direct the payment of the additional services from the Victim's Compensation Fund. For the purpose of this particular exam, the one hundred dollar deductible is waived for award eligibility under the fund. The South Carolina Victim's Compensation Fund must develop appropriate guidelines and procedures and distribute them to law enforcement agencies and appropriate health care facilities.

## REPORTING STATUTES WHICH MAY IMPACT RAPE VICTIMS

### **S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-1072. Reporting medical treatment for gunshot wound; immunity; physician-patient privilege abrogated; penalties.**

(A) Any physician, nurse, or any other medical or emergency medical services personnel of a hospital, clinic, or other health care facility or provider who knowingly treats any person suffering from a gunshot wound or who receives a request for such treatment shall report within a reasonable time the existence of the gunshot wound to the sheriff's department of the county in which the treatment is administered or a request is received. However, no report is necessary if a law enforcement officer is present with the victim while treatment is being administered.

(B) The reports provided for in subsection (A) may be made orally, or otherwise. A hospital, clinic, or other health care facility or provider may designate an individual to make the reports provided for in this section. However, a report must be made as soon as possible, but no later than the time of the victim's release from that facility.

(C) A person required to make a report pursuant to this section or who participates in judicial proceedings resulting from the report, acting in good faith, is immune from civil and criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of these actions. In all such civil and criminal proceedings, good faith is rebuttably presumed.

(D) For purposes of this section, the confidential or privileged nature of communication between physician and patient and any other professional person and his patient or client is abrogated and does not constitute grounds for failure to report or the exclusion of evidence resulting from a report made pursuant to this section.

(E) A person required to report the existence of a gunshot wound who knowingly fails to do so is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five hundred dollars.